

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of enabling a user to use a bridge in either a VLAN aware mode or a VLAN unaware mode, said method being performed in a layer-2 bridge containing a plurality of ports connecting to different portions of a layer-2 network, said method comprising:

receiving a configuration data indicating ~~whether~~ said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode ~~or said VLAN unaware mode~~;

receiving a packet in a priority tagged format containing an associated VLAN identifier on a first port contained in said plurality of ports; and

~~processing said packet according to said VLAN unaware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN unaware mode, and according to said VLAN aware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode~~

setting said VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received;

searching an address table having at least a field to store data representing said VLAN identifier using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and

sending said packet on said destination port.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

storing ~~an~~said address table in a content addressable memory (CAM),
wherein said address table indicates a specific one of said plurality
of ports on which each packet is to be forwarded; and
providing in said address table a field to store data representing a ~~VLAN~~
~~identifier~~.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said determining comprises:

searching said CAM using said destination address and a pre-specified
value, wherein said pre-specified value is stored in said field,
whereby said CAM can be implemented without a mask and be used in
combination with both of said VLAN aware mode and said VLAN
unaware mode.

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Cancelled).

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 61, wherein said destination port
is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, said method further
comprising inserting said tag information into said packet before sending said
packet on said destination port.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said ~~configuration~~
~~data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode, wherein~~
~~said packet is received in a priority tagged format containing a VLAN identifier~~
~~equaling zero, wherein said processing comprises:~~

setting a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received; searching an address table using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and sending said packet on said destination port.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, said method further modifying said VLAN identifier of said packet to equal said identifier associated with the incoming port.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said layer-2 network comprises Ethernet network and said layer-2 bridge comprises an Ethernet bridge.

11 - 37 (Cancelled).

38. (Currently Amended) A layer-2 bridge enabling usage in either a VLAN aware mode or a VLAN unaware mode, said layer-2 bridge containing a plurality of ports connecting to different portions of a layer-2 network, said layer-2 bridge comprising:

means for receiving a configuration data indicating ~~whether~~ said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode ~~or said VLAN unaware mode~~;

means for receiving a packet in a priority tagged format containing an associated VLAN identifier on a first port contained in said plurality of ports; and

means for processing is operable to:

set a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received;

search an address table having a field to store data representing a VLAN identifier using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and

send said packet on said destination port~~said packet according to said VLAN unaware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN unaware mode, and according to said VLAN aware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode.~~

39. (Cancelled).

40. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim 3938, further comprising:

means for storing an address table, wherein said address table indicates a specific one of said plurality of ports on which each packet is to be forwarded; and

~~means for providing in said address table a field to store data representing a VLAN identifier.~~

41. (Cancelled).

42. (Cancelled).

43. (Cancelled).

44. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim 4338, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, said layer-2 bridge further comprising means for inserting said tag information into said packet before sending said packet on said destination port.

45. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim 38, wherein said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware

~~mode, wherein said packet is received in a priority tagged format containing a VLAN identifier equaling zero, wherein said means for processing is operable to:~~
~~set a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received;~~
~~search an address table using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and~~
~~send said packet on said destination port.~~

46. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim 45, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, said layer-2 bridge further comprising means for modifying said VLAN identifier of said packet to equal said identifier associated with the incoming port.

47. (Original) The layer-2 bridge of claim 38, wherein said layer-2 network comprises Ethernet network and said layer-2 bridge comprises an Ethernet bridge.

48 – 74 (Cancelled).

75. (Currently Amended) A machinecomputer readable medium carrying encoded with one or more sequences of instructions for enabling a user to use a layer-2 bridge in either a VLAN aware mode or a VLAN unaware mode, said layer-2 bridge containing a plurality of ports connecting to different portions of a layer-2 network, wherein execution of said one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors contained in said layer-2 bridge causes said one or more processors to perform the actions of:

receiving a configuration data indicating whether said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode ~~or said VLAN unaware mode~~;

receiving a packet in a priority tagged format containing an associated VLAN identifier on a first port contained in said plurality of ports; and

setting a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received;

searching an address table having at least a field to store data representing a VLAN identifier using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and

sending said packet on said destination port.

~~processing said packet according to said VLAN unaware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN unaware mode, and according to said VLAN aware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode.~~

76. (Cancelled).

77. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine~~computer readable medium of claim 76, further comprising:

storing an address table in a content addressable memory (CAM), wherein said address table indicates a specific one of said plurality of ports on which each packet is to be forwarded; and

providing in said address table a field to store data representing a VLAN identifier.

78. (Currently Amended) The ~~machine~~computer readable medium of claim 77, wherein said determining comprises:

searching said CAM using said destination address and a pre-specified value, wherein said pre-specified value is stored in said field,

whereby said CAM can be implemented without a mask and be used in combination with both of said VLAN aware mode and said VLAN unaware mode.

79. (Cancelled).

80. (Cancelled).

81. (Currently Amended) The ~~machinecomputer~~ readable medium of claim 8075, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, further comprising inserting said tag information into said packet before sending said packet on said destination port.

82. (Currently Amended) The ~~machinecomputer~~ readable medium of claim 75, wherein said ~~configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode, wherein said packet is received in a priority tagged format containing a VLAN identifier equaling zero, wherein said processing comprises:~~

~~setting a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received;~~

~~searching an address table using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and~~

~~sending said packet on said destination port.~~

83. (Currently Amended) The ~~machinecomputer~~ readable medium of claim 82, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, further comprising modifying said VLAN identifier of said packet to equal said identifier associated with the incoming port.

84. (Currently Amended) The ~~machinecomputer~~ readable medium of claim 75, wherein said layer-2 network comprises Ethernet network and said layer-2 bridge comprises an Ethernet bridge.

85 – 111 (Cancelled).

112. (Currently Amended) A layer-2 bridge enabling usage in either a VLAN aware mode or a VLAN unaware mode, said layer-2 bridge containing a plurality of ports connecting to different portions of a layer-2 network, said layer-2 bridge comprising:

a medium access control (MAC) block receiving a packet in a priority tagged format containing a VLAN identifier on a first port contained in said plurality of ports;

a memory storing said packet;

a processing unit receiving a configuration data indicating ~~whether~~ said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode is further operable to:

set a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received;

search an address table using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and

send said packet on said destination port ~~or said VLAN unaware mode, and said processing unit processing said packet according to said VLAN unaware mode if said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN unaware mode, and according to said VLAN aware mode if said~~

~~configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode.~~

113. (Cancelled).

114. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim ~~113~~112, further comprising a content addressable memory (CAM) storing an address table, wherein said address table indicates a specific one of said plurality of ports on which each packet is to be forwarded, ~~wherein said address table contains a field to store data representing a VLAN identifier.~~

115. (Original) The layer-2 bridge of claim 114, wherein said processing unit is operable to:

search said CAM using said destination address and a pre-specified value, wherein said pre-specified value is stored in said field, whereby said CAM can be implemented without a mask and be used in combination with both of said VLAN aware mode and said VLAN unaware mode.

116. (Cancelled).

117. (Cancelled).

118. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim ~~117~~112, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, said layer-2 bridge wherein processing unit is further operable to insert said tag information into said packet before sending said packet on said destination port.

119. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim 112, wherein said configuration data indicates that said bridge is to operate in said VLAN aware mode, wherein said packet is received in a priority tagged format containing a VLAN identifier equaling zero, ~~wherein said processing unit is further operable to:~~

set a VLAN identifier associated with said packet to equal an identifier associated with an incoming port on which said packet is received; search an address table using a destination address and said VLAN identifier to determine a destination port; and send said packet on said destination port.

120. (Currently Amended) The layer-2 bridge of claim 119, wherein said destination port is configured for forwarding in VLAN tagged format, said processing unit further modifying said VLAN identifier of said packet to equal said identifier associated with the incoming port.

121. (Original) The layer-2 bridge of claim 112, wherein said layer-2 network comprises Ethernet network and said layer-2 bridge comprises an Ethernet bridge.

128 – 148 (Cancelled).